

most exalted and refined; with them, the possession of the philosopher's stone was to be the means of health and happiness, an instrument by which man could command the services of superior beings, control the elements, defy the obstructions of time and space, and acquire the most intimate knowledge of all the secrets of the universe. These objects were utterly unobtainable. The refined Rosicrucians were utterly disgusted with the coarse, gross, sensual spirits who had been in communication with man previous to their day, so they decreed the annihilation of them all, and substituted in their stead a race of mild, beautiful, and beneficent beings. The spirits of the olden time were a malignant race, and took especial delight in doing mischief. But the new generation is mild and benignant. These spirits, as this petition attests, indulge in the most innocent amusements and harmless recreations, such as sliding, raising and tipping tables, producing pleasant sounds and varied lights, and sometimes curing diseases which were previously considered incurable, and for the existence of this simple and benignant race, our petitioners are indebted to the brethren of the rosy cross.

Among the modern professors of spiritualism, Cagliostro was the most justly celebrated. In Paris, his saloons were thronged with the rich and the noble. To old ladies he sold beauty that would endure for centuries; and his charming Countess gained immense wealth by granting attending ephras to such ladies as were rich enough to pay for their service. The 'Biographie des Contemporees,'—a work which our present mediums ought to consult with care,—says that he had a fine lady in Paris who would not part with the shade of Lucrèce in the apartments of Cagliostro. There was not a military officer who would not discuss the art of war with Alexander, Hannibal, or Caesar; or an advocate or counselor who would not argue legal points with the ghost of Cicero. These were spiritual manifestations worth paying for, and all our degenerate mediums would have to hide their diminished heads in the presence of Cagliostro.

It would be a curious inquiry to follow this occult science through all its phases of mineral magnetism, animal magnetism, &c., as it is now the present latest and lowest phase of all spiritual manifestation; but I have said enough to show the truth of Burke's beautiful aphorism, 'The credulity of dupes is as inexhaustible as the invention of knaves.'

This speech was listened to with much attention, but frequently interrupted by laughter.

Mr. WALKER—What does the Senator propose to do with the petition?

Mr. PETT—Let it be referred to the three thousand clergymen. (Laughter.)

Mr. WALKER—I suggest that it be referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. (Laughter.)

Mr. SHIELDS—I am willing to agree to the reference.

Mr. WALKER—It may be that we may have to enter into foreign relations with these spirits. (Laughter.) If so, it is a proper subject for the consideration of that committee. It may be necessary to ascertain whether or not Americans, when they leave this world, lose their capacity to elucidate it is greater than that of any other Senator. I would therefore suggest to him, that it should either go to a Select Committee, on his motion, or be referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, of which he is Chairman. Certainly, the Committee on Foreign Relations have nothing to do with it. Perhaps it will be better to allow the petition to lie on the table.

Mr. SHIELDS—This is an important subject, and should not be sneered away in this manner. (Laughter.) I was willing to agree to the motion of the Senator from California, but I do not wish to send the petition to the Committee on Foreign Relations, unless the Chairman of that Committee is perfectly satisfied that he can do the subject justice. I had thought of proposing to refer the matter to the Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads, because there may be a possibility of establishing a spiritual telegraph between the material and the spiritual world. (Laughter.)

Mr. MASON—I move that the petition lie upon the table. Agreed to.

From the National Intelligencer.

SHIELDS ON THE GHOST-SEERS.

LETTER FROM EX-SENATOR TALLMADGE.

MESSES. GILES & SEATON: My attention has been attracted to the proceedings of the Senate, published in the *Intelligencer* of this morning, on the presentation of a memorial by Gen. Shields, signed by myself and 15,000 citizens of the United States, on the subject of 'Spiritual Manifestations.' The commission to investigate these extraordinary phenomena. Gen. Shields has given a very good synopsis of the memorial, and had he stopped there, I should not have felt myself called upon for any remarks. But, contrary to my expectations, the General has attempted to ridicule a subject which appealed to his better judgment, and which, according to my understanding, was to receive very different treatment at his hands.

When I first spoke to Gen. Shields about presenting this memorial to the Senate, he treated it with great courtesy, and expressed his willingness to make its reference to a Select Committee. Without expressing any opinion in favor of the spiritual theory, he agreed with me that, whether spiritual or philosophical, it was worthy of investigation. After this understanding, I confess my surprise that he should have treated it as he did; that instead of an investigation by a Select Committee, of which, by parliamentary usage, he would have been chairman, and where those who have investigated the subject could have been heard, he should have given in advance a *rehash* of what has so often been said before by the opponents of spiritualism! My habitual respect for the honorable body of which he is a member will cause me to forego any remarks upon the attempted criticisms of himself and others on this occasion.

The General is pleased to characterize these manifestations as a 'delusion.' Now, I do not pretend to any extraordinary power to understand a subject more than other men whose position in life would indicate a talent equal, if not superior to my own. Still, I do pretend, that when I have investigated a subject which they have not, I am better capable than they of judging whether there is any 'delusion' involved in the conclusion to which I have arrived, and I cannot consent to surrender my reason and the evidence of my own senses to their instincts. I have made it a rule of my life never to write or speak on a subject of which I knew nothing. That rule has saved me from much awkwardness and embarrassment, as it would also save others, were it adopted by them.

But if it be a 'delusion,' then the greater necessity of investigating it, and showing it to be such. I have as great an interest in ascertaining that fact as any other man. If it be 'spiritualism,' there is much less necessity for its investigation, because its march will be onward, and no human power can resist it. Do away with the 'delusion,' if it be one, and you do away the insanity which it is sometimes alleged to be consequent upon it; and although the honorable gentleman's bill granting lands for insane asylums would still be a relief for the vast numbers rendered such by religious excitement, still they would have fewer inmates by reason of the humane principle adopted by this investigation, namely, of preventing instead of curing or palliating the disease.

I hope, therefore, that the 'lame and impotent conclusion' to which the Senate arrived, if it be the memorial on the table, may be reconsidered, and that it may receive that consideration which its importance demands.

Respectfully yours,

N. P. TALLMADGE.

Washington, April 18, 1854.

John Mitchell wishes he had a lot of negro slaves in Alabama. The Nebraska bill puts negroes and Irishmen on a level in respect to political power in the new territory. John Mitchell warmly supports the Nebraska bill. Are we to infer that he would as lief have Irishmen as negroes for his slaves?

THE A. S. CONVENTION IN CINCINNATI.

Our readers may learn something of the spirit and scope of the late triumphant Anti-Slavery Convention in Cincinnati, by a careful perusal of the following Resolutions, which were adopted by that body:—

Resolved, That we stand on the platform of the Revolution, and hold these truths to be self-evident:—That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights; that among them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; That Liberty being the natural birth-right of every human being, Slavery can never be legalized by any human enactments, but is always and everywhere an usurpation on the part of the master, and imposes no obligation whatever on the part of the slave to obey the laws of the master.

Resolved, That rights are not limited by Race; that the strong have no warrant to oppress the weak, nor the wise to subject the ignorant, nor the rich to trample on the poor; that it is the duty of the strong and wise to assist the weak and ignorant; that to live by personal labor is honorable, and to subsist on the unpaid toil of others is mean and despicable; that, as Republicans, we regard idleness and crime as alone disgraceful, and energy and merit the only legitimate basis of social distinction.

Resolved, That Slavery is oppressive to classes, is contrary alike to the interests of the master and the slave, reduces the mass of the white population to poverty, stigmatizes labor, encourages idleness, fosters dissipation, retards education, destroys morality, degrades religion, cripples private enterprise, and corrupts public virtue.

Resolved, That while three millions of native Americans are subjected for life to irresponsible control, compelled to work without wages, forbidden to marry, to educate themselves or their children, or to acquire property, systematically degraded to the level of the brutes, and regarded by the law as chattels, it is our duty to denounce this domestic despotism, and to demand the immediate and unconditional emancipation of every slave.

Resolved, That we regard with indignation, but without surprise, the continual aggressions of Slavery, and warn our fellow-citizens that the slave power never keeps compact, nor respects compromise;—that it is the settled design of the South to make Slavery national and to abolish liberty everywhere, and to extend the rule of power and patronage of the Union to the curse over the entire North American continent.

Resolved, That Liberty and Slavery are essentially and eternally separate, opposite and antagonistic, and that between them is no middle ground; that those who are not ranged on the side of Liberty, are in the end ranged on the side of Slavery, and are to be held accountable for all its abominations.

Resolved, That since slavery is always and everywhere a sin against God, and a crime against man, since it is always and everywhere a curse to the soul upon which it is established, a fruitful source of evil, having no rightful existence anywhere in the world, against which every just principle in the universe is perpetually arrayed, there can be no compromise with it which does not necessarily involve a concession of rights to wrong, a sacrifice of principles to the lowest expediency, and that, therefore, we are utterly and firmly opposed to all such compromise, as inconsistent with genuine anti-slavery, and demoralizing in their tendency and practical results.

Resolved, That in seeking to repudiate that rule of the Missouri Compromise which restricts slavery to the South of 36 deg. 30 min. of North latitude, and to the territory acquired by the purchase of Louisiana, after having fully secured the advantages which originally induced them to become parties to it, slaveholders are acting entirely consistent with the genius of their Institution; that injustice, fraud, and robbery, form the groundwork of the slave system; that slaveholders may not be expected to do above their heads; that the moral and social atmosphere of slaveholders is wholly unfavorable to the growth of common honesty; and as men may not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles—so the people of the North are again taught the folly of confidence in the faith of men who have been taught to place their faith with God, and the enslavement of his children.

Resolved, That the present attempt to introduce slavery into Nebraska is but one step in a series of aggressions upon the rights and liberties of America, and one more act of subservience on the part of Northern politicians with Southern principles; that the passage of the Nebraska bill will give to the South such additional representation as to reduce the North to hopeless political vassalage, and thus enable the slaveholders to use us as their instruments to annex Cuba, conquer Mexico, and eventually to restore the foreign slave trade, and Africanize the Western Hemisphere.

Resolved, That the North, having a majority of two in the Senate and fifty-six in the House of Representatives, is responsible for the extension of slavery; that the politicians are but the echo of the people; that the true cause of their degradation is the pro-slavery sentiment of the American people; that the only honorable National policy is the creation of a public sentiment true to the principles of justice and humanity.

Resolved, That while the general government permits the introduction of slaves into the territories, and their transportation under the National flag over the ocean, and along our rivers, maintaining slavery in the District of Columbia, and endeavors to enforce the Fugitive Slave bill, every citizen of the United States is, to that extent, directly responsible for the existence and participation in the guilt of Slavery.

Resolved, That the province of the General Government is to establish justice and give blessings of Liberty; that we therefore demand the prohibition of Slavery in all the Territories of the United States, its abolition in the District of Columbia, the repeal of the Fugitive Slave bill, and the prohibition of the inter-State Slave trade upon the ocean and on all the National highways.

Resolved, That the members of this convention have learned, with regret, that Samuel Lewis is detained at home by illness; and that, feeling the loss of his presence and counsel in this convention, and remembering with gratitude and admiration his eminent services and self-sacrificing devotion to the anti-slavery cause, we tender him our heartfelt sympathy; with the assurance that his health may be speedily restored, and that we may soon again greet him as formerly in the harness of anti-slavery labor, where he has justly earned the gratitude of the friends of freedom, and the blessings of those who are ready to perish.

Resolved, That the Secretaries be directed to supply Mr. Lewis with a copy of the proceedings of this convention, and that we demand the prohibition of Slavery in all the Territories of the United States, its abolition in the District of Columbia, the repeal of the Fugitive Slave bill, and the prohibition of the inter-State Slave trade upon the ocean and on all the National highways.

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Resolved, That the existence of human slavery in this country, with all its crimes and horrors, is to be met by a properly chargeable upon the criminal profligacy of the American churches to the sin of slavery, and we cordially and affectionately, on behalf of the slave, solicit their attention to his wrongs; that it is the duty of the American churches to declare the stealing of men more criminal than the stealing of sheep, for, in the language of Christ, how much better is a man than a sheep; that they should exclude slaveholders from their communion, since they already exclude from membership those guilty of far smaller offences; that while we disclaim any right to dictate to them their mode of action, we condemn their apathy as disgraceful to Christianity, ruinous to the country, and dangerous to the bodies and souls of the slaves.

Resolved, That since colored people are excluded from the best privileges of literature and education by the unjust spirit of caste, we hail with pleasure the noble efforts of the colored people of Cincinnati to establish schools, libraries, and lecture halls, and we congratulate the success, and call upon the public to aid them in their laudable efforts;—that in view of the almost insurmountable industrial disabilities under which they labor, the friends of Equal Rights should encourage them, both by precept and practice, to enter all the useful trades and professions.

Resolved, That we honor our fellow-citizens, and especially our German fellow-citizens, for their late manly and united protest against the encroachments of slavery, and we hereby declare that, as abolitionists, we stand upon the platform of universal human liberty, that our sympathies are as wide as humanity, that we protest earnestly against despotism in Europe as in America, that we know in this cause no limitation of country, or kindred, or complexion, but claim for every man, on every continent, his rights against the world!

Resolved, That the Federal constitution declares that Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States, which may be included within the Union, according to their respective numbers of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons; and that, therefore, by the present construction of this clause slaveholders have an unjust and pernicious influence in the councils of the nation, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we will labor for such an alteration of the Constitution as shall entirely abolish all representation in the Government based upon property in human beings.

Resolved, That the Fugitive Slave Bill is an unconstitutional and unjust enormity, a violation of State rights, an engine of cruelty when enforced, and a demoralizing caricature of law when disobeyed; that we pledge ourselves, in the name of the higher law of God, to systematic violation of all its provisions, and to active co-operation with the hunted fugitives for liberty.

Resolved, That John Mitchell, in avowing his desire to possess a good fat plantation well stocked with negroes, has thrown off the mask of hypocrisy, and exposed the hideous deformity of a totally depraved human heart, and that in his attack upon the eminent philanthropist, Jas. Haughton, in attempting to perpetrate murder, he has unwittingly committed suicide.

Which, having been put, was adopted.

APPEAL

TO THE MINISTERS AND CHURCHES OF IOWA AND GEORGIA.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR:—As a colored man, a man of color, we make the following statement to the benevolent, and ask that you will render him the aid he so much requires, by laying the following statement before your congregation or friends, and receiving such sums as they may contribute to his relief: which you will please to remit to C. Fletcher, Esq., of the District of Columbia, or to the Rev. Mr. Varian, an Irish refugee, through Mr. Herne, offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That John Mitchell, in avowing his desire to possess a good fat plantation well stocked with negroes, has thrown off the mask of hypocrisy, and exposed the hideous deformity of a totally depraved human heart, and that in his attack upon the eminent philanthropist, Jas. Haughton, in attempting to perpetrate murder, he has unwittingly committed suicide.

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THE LIBERATOR.

No Union with Slaveholders.

BOSTON, APRIL 28, 1854.

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

The Twentieth Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society will be held in the City of New York, in the REV. DR. CHAPIN'S CHURCH, in Broadway, between Spring and Prince Streets, on WEDNESDAY, May 10th, 1854, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The meeting will be addressed by Rev. WILLIAM H. FURNES, of Philadelphia; Rev. THEODORE PARKER and WENDELL PHILLIPS, Esq., of Boston; Miss LUCY STONE, of West Brookfield; and ROBERT PURVIS, Esq., of Byberry, Pa.

The Society will hold meetings for Business and Discussion, (in some hall yet to be procured,) on the evening following the public Anniversary, and on the succeeding THURSDAY and FRIDAY, May 11th and 12th.

The members and friends of the Society, far and near, are earnestly invited to be present at the public Anniversary, and to give us the benefit of their counsel and co-operation at the subsequent meetings. The condition of the country in relation to the Anti-Slavery Agitation will present, for the consideration of the Society, topics of the gravest importance, affecting its future action; hence a large attendance is desirable.

WM. LLOYD GARRISON, President.

EDMUND QUINCY, Sec. H. GAY, Sec. WENDELL PHILLIPS, Sec.

THE BIBLE OF THE REFORMATION REFORMED.

Some time ago, we received a letter from the respected compiler of this remarkable volume, (with whom we have had a friendly personal acquaintance for several years past,) informing us that he had forwarded to our care, from Liverpool, a large box, containing copies of his work, to be presented to various persons, eminent by their position in society, or by their interest in the cause of Universal Progress, and requesting us to see them duly delivered. After considerable delay, the box was received, and the request made as complied with as far as practicable, and in nearly every instance.

The Dedication is made to the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty; to the two British Houses of Parliament; to the Honorable, Intelligent, and Liberal, both Clergy and Laity, of the Established Churches of Great Britain; and to professing Christians of every Sect and Denomination.

The compiler has presented copies to the Queen, to many of the Nobility, to Archbishops, Bishops, and the Clergy of various sects, and to many others; and has thus expended a large sum in his philanthropic zeal to aid, elevate and bless the human race.

We have devoted a very large portion of the fourth page of our present number to extracts from the Preliminary and Explanatory Observations of Mr. FENIX accompanying this volume, thus enabling our readers to know how this whole subject lies in his own mind, the ground whereon he bases his right to re-arrange the Bible according to his own idea of the fitness of things, and what is the result to which he has come, after expending so much time and money in perfecting his plan—namely, (he being a distinguished Socialist, of the Owen school), that the doctrine of Socialism are abundantly proved from the plainest passages of Scripture; that the Socialist doctrine of the worship of God is a Scriptural doctrine; in short, that, by carefully collating, from Genesis to Revelation, (including the Apocrypha), and consistently arranging, whatever in the Bible seems to belong to the prevailing ideas of God and Man at special periods, and rejecting whatever is conceived to be at variance with absolute benevolence the product of the whole is Socialism, in its widest, and most comprehensive sense. Such is the mode reported to by Mr. FENIX.

To vindicate the ways of God to man, at least, so far as the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures are concerned.

This book makes about 1200 pages, in fine but very legible print. It contains, in fact, three volumes in one—the first being 'The Old Testament Reformed'—the second, 'The New Testament Reformed'—the third, 'The New Apocrypha.' It is divided into seven books—1. Jewish History. 2. The Laws of Moses. 3. The Prophets and the Psalms. 4. Jewish Wisdom. 5. The Gospels. 6. Mythology. 7. Mysteries.

The motive which has induced Mr. FENIX to undertake this novel, extraordinary, and most laborious task, we are quite sure, has been one of disinterested benevolence, and with sole reference to the good of mankind. What will come of it we are not prepared to say, except that it cannot fail to help destroy the popular idolatry which is paid throughout Christendom to the Bible as at present compiled, and thus to enfranchise the human mind from the bondage of superstition. We honor Mr. FENIX for his courage and self-sacrifice; we know him to be a veteran friend and advocate of the outraged and destitute working classes in England; we admire his catholicity of spirit, and esteem him for his many excellent qualities of head and heart. With what clearness and cogency he can write, the admirable quotations we have made on our last page will enable every reader to decide.

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The motive which has induced Mr. FENIX to undertake this novel, extraordinary, and most laborious task, we are quite sure, has been one of disinterested benevolence, and with sole reference to the good of mankind. What will come of it we are not prepared to say, except that it cannot fail to help destroy the popular idolatry which is paid throughout Christendom to the Bible as at present compiled, and thus to enfranchise the human mind from the bondage of superstition. We honor Mr. FENIX for his courage and self-sacrifice; we know him to be a veteran friend and advocate of the outraged and destitute working classes in England; we admire his catholicity of spirit, and esteem him for his many excellent qualities of head and heart. With what clearness and cogency he can write, the admirable quotations we have made on our last page will enable every reader to decide.

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POETRY.

The following keen satire upon one of the Massachusetts Senators in Congress derives its edge from the facts in the case, which are extremely humiliating to every manly soul on the soil of the old Bay State.

From the Commonwealth.

SONG FOR THE KITCHEN FIRESIDE.

BY DR. DANIEL MANN.

'Tis of a famous Senator, from Massachusetts sent,
The Old Bay State, in Congress, all for to represent;
And a sturdy farmer bold, who staid at home to work,
To plow the ground, and raise the corn, and fatten
beef and pork;

And of a gray old pilgrim, who went the country
through,
To see the folks, and hear the news, and tell of what he
knew.

'What news? what news from Congress?' outspoke the
farmer bold;

'They talk of turning Freedom's soil to dens where
slaves are sold.'

'What says our Senator to that? now tell me, pilgrim
gray!'

'He made a pretty speech—about the same that 'Toot'
would say—

'It's of no consequence—he guess'd that slavery
wouldn't spread!'

'We didn't send him there for that?' the sturdy farmer
said.

'With much of maudlin argument and drivelling debate,
They brought the matter to a vote one evening rather
late.'

'How votes our Senator on that? now tell me, pilgrim
gray!'

'He didn't vote at all, because (so Wade and Seward
say.)

'His back was weak, he was fatigued, and so he went to
bed—'

'We didn't send him there for that?' the sturdy farmer
said.

'Three thousand ministers of God sent out their strong
protest,

'That slavery should not curse the land which God with
freedom blest;

'They asked our Senator with speed their message to
convey.'

'What said our Senator to that? now tell me, pilgrim
gray!'

'He gave it—then apologized, and said he hadn't
read—'

'We didn't send him there for that?' the sturdy farmer
said.

'Now tell me, sturdy farmer bold,' then said the pil-
grim gray,

'For what then did you send him there? Come, tell
me, now, I pray.

To specify, apologize, and then to bed retire,
Is what he thinks you sent him for—what more do you
require?

'That's been his trade for fifty years, and what's the use
to send?

'Can ancient puppies learn new tricks? Now tell me,
farmer bold,

'Now, pilgrim gray,' the farmer said, 'can you be such
a fit

'To think we sent our Senator to Washington for that?
To make soft speeches, 'politize, and sleep while others
vote,

'When perill'd freedom calls for aid in warning's loudest
note?

'We sent him to defend the rights for which our fathers
bled,

'And honor's cause to vindicate,' the sturdy farmer said.

'Now tell me, sturdy farmer bold, could you be such a
fit

'To send to Congress such a man for such a work as that?
Is't you that send your geese abroad to drive away the
fox?

'Or do you set your chickens on, to frighten off the
hawks?

'Or when a prowling wolf presumes to violate your fold,
Pray do you set a lamb to guard? now tell me, farmer
bold.'

'Now, pilgrim gray, what's that you say?' replied the
farmer then—

'Call you our Senator a goose, a lamb, an infant hen?
What hero said, "If slaves should rise, their liberty to
gain,

'He'd don his knapsack mighty quick, and help rebid
the chain?'

'I'd think that champion, all so brave oppression's cause
to aid,

'Might show some pluck for freedom once,' the sturdy
farmer said.

'Pray, farmer, have you seen the boy, when other boys
would fight,

'Would always take the strongest side, regardless of the
right?

'What did you think his honor worth?—what would you
trust him for?

'I've seen that boy grow up a man, and be a Senator!
Yet, in each sphere, that hunker soul you ever may be-
hold;

'What otherwise could you expect?' now tell me, farmer
bold.

The farmer drove his team a-field, the pilgrim went his
way,

'Yet off the farmer looked askance, and eyed that pilgrim
gray.'

'A sharp old chap,' the farmer said—'too many guns
for me;

'His head has got some logic, and his tongue is pretty
free;

'And, more than that, the fellow's right! I see I've
been misled

'To vote for such a Senator,' the sturdy farmer said.

APRIL.

BY K. P. WILLIS.

I have found violets. April hath come on,
And the cool winds feel softer, and the rain
Falls in the bewildered drops of summer time.
You may hear birds at morning, and at eve
The same dove lingers till the twilight falls,
Cooling upon the eaves, and drawing in
His beautiful, bright neck; and, from the hills,
A murmur, like the hoarseness of the sea,
Tells the release of waters, and the earth
Sends up a pleasant smell, and the dry leaves
Are lifted by the grass, and so I know
That Nature, with her delicate ear, hath heard
The dropping of the velvet foot of Spring.
Take of my violets! I found them where
The liquid south stole o'er them, on a bank
That lead'd to running water. There's to me
A daintiness about these early flowers,
That touches me like poetry. They blow
With such a simple loveliness among
The common herbs of pasture, and breathe out
Their lives so unobtrusively, like hearts
Whose beatings are too gentle for the world.
I love to go in the capricious days
Of April, and hunt violets, when the rain
Is in the blue caps trembling, and they nod
So gracefully to the kisses of the wind.
It may be deemed too idle, but the young
Read Nature like the manuscript of Heaven,
And call the flowers its poetry. Go out!
Ye spirits of habitual unrest,
And read it, when 'the fever of the world'
Hath made your hearts impatient, and, if life
Hath yet one spring unpoison'd, it will be
Like a beguiling music to its flow,
And you will no more wonder that I love
To hunt for violets in the April time.

THE LIBERATOR.

THE BIBLE OF THE REFORMATION REFORMED.

THE SEVEN SEALS BROKEN OPEN: OR, THE BIBLE OF THE REFORMATION REFORMED. Three Volumes, in Seven Books. Containing the whole of the Old and New Testaments, according to the generally received English Protestant Version, but under an entirely New Arrangement in every part. With Preface, Introduction, Commentary, Indexes, &c. By JOHN FINCH, Merchant, Liverpool. London: James Rigby, 240 Strand. 1858.

The Editor's General Preface.

Man is a constantly progressive being. In philosophy, mechanism, and manufactures, his improvement during the past and present century has been greater than in any former period. Geography, astronomy, geology, and chemistry have dispelled the mists, mysteries, day-dreams, and trickery of priestcraft and superstition. True science has broken through the dress of scholastic sophistry, learned ignorance, science falsely so called. Common sense has exploded the fables of sectarianism and the slavery of creeds. And religions, based upon charity, good morals, reason, and free inquiry, purified from all its corruptions, begins to be clearly seen, and its native excellence duly appreciated. But the antiquated forms and ceremonies, the absurd dogmas of faith, and modes of conveying religious instruction of dark bygone ages, still remain unchanged, unimproved, either in our national churches or among the various sects of dissenters. The necessary consequence is, the priesthood are despised, the churches and chapels are deserted by multitudes of the most enlightened, conscientious, and virtuous characters; the population is still advancing in knowledge, and the evil continually increases; and unless a thorough reform in Bible religion take place speedily, it will be abandoned altogether.

Nothing certain is known as to when or by whom our present canon of Scripture was formed; but some eminent ecclesiastical writers affirm that priests and bishops, assembled in councils about the third or fourth century of the Christian era, having collected a great number of manuscripts and versions of the writings of Jews and early Christians, amidst great diversity of opinion, by their own authority, pronounced some of these books false and spurious, and others oracles of truth—the inspired Word of God.

What the contents or character of the rejected writings were is unknown to us, as the greater number were suppressed, destroyed, or are lost. The approved manuscripts and versions—many of them not known when or by whom originally written, containing many good and useful truths concerning God, human duty, and human expectations, and accounts of the unrivalled example and divine instructions of that wisest, best, and most benevolent of moral teachers, Jesus of Nazareth, mixed up with much that is useless, erroneous and superstitious—having been carefully preserved by the Christian priesthood in Rome, France, England, and other countries, through many succeeding generations, have long become the canon or standard of religious truth to all sectarian Christian churches.

These manuscripts, though written in obsolete languages, referring in many places to manners, customs and transactions unknown to general readers, compared with each other, containing at least 20,000 various readings, rendered into English by translations acknowledged by many in all sects to be imperfect, containing in themselves much false philosophy, many palpable contradictions, and very few of them pretending to any other than human origin; notwithstanding all this, nearly every sect has maintained the perfect agreement of the whole; and most of them assert that every word—aye, every syllable and letter of our common translation, was written under the influence of direct inspiration from the Spirit of God. Hence thousands of bulky volumes have been written to reconcile and explain them; hence the contradictory opinions of a hundred different sects, reviling, hating and persecuting each other; hence stripes, imprisonments, wars, massacres and death. The divine right of kings, aristocratic monopolies, the prostration of reason, priestly dominion, exclusive privileges to wealth and rank, the inequality of men, the inferiority or nonentity of women, private property, selfish interests, sanguinary laws, African and American slavery—aye, even war itself—admitted and justified from a book we have set up as the scriptures of truth, the very Word of God.

The time for a second reformation of Christianity, therefore, is now fully come, and it must begin in the house of God. The oracles of the Pagan world were kept by the priests; and till the time of the first Reformation from Popery, the oracles of Moses and of Christ—the Scriptures—were carefully kept by the priest-hood, and not allowed to be used by the people. But the first reformers burst open their cabinet, and boldly translated the Bible into all languages, whilst the printing press and Bible societies have put it into the hands of all peoples. On freely examining the book, however, as it is at present arranged, it has been found to contain so many glaring elements, that it has given rise to innumerable sects, widely differing in opinion and in practice from each other, who for three centuries past have been continually disputing about speculative notions of no practical importance or utility to mankind.

For the purpose of enabling the poor to understand the gospel—to arrange the Scriptures so as to make the first two volumes suitable for all schools, to read in all pulpits, in all private families, and by all individuals—to terminate all strife and contention about modes of faith and forms of worship, and thus promote peace on earth and good will among men, are the objects sought by the editor of this book.

The great principles he has taken for his guide, in all the selections he has made, are—that truth being one, truth is always consistent with itself; and each truth must be consistent with every other truth.

That the undeniable principles of Christ's gospel are—

1st. That God is presented to us as the great Father of mankind: that he governs the world, pardons sinners, and loves all his creatures as a father loves his children.

2d. That the gospel is glad tidings only, especially to the poor, afflicted, and persecuted.

3d. That the life of Jesus is our example—is his religion in practice.

4th. That he gave one new commandment, that we should love one another.

5th. That there is a future state of great bliss for the virtuous and benevolent.

6th. That his immediate followers had nothing to expect in this world but sufferings and persecutions. And

7th. That his religion released the Jews from their burdensome ceremonial, and broke down the middle wall of partition between nations, and made the race of men one family.

That the indisputable principles taught by Moses are: 1st. That Jehovah alone is their God, and that God is one.

2d. That the ten commandments are the basis and foundation of all duties both towards God and man.

3d. That the descendants of Abraham are God's chosen and peculiar people.

4th. That by the promise of God to Abraham, they were entitled to the land of Canaan for a perpetual possession.

5th. That God is presented to them as 'The Lord of Hosts,' 'The God of Battles,' as 'The Great King and Indefatigable Judge.'

6th. That for obedience to his laws, they are promised great temporal prosperity. And,

7th. That disobedience is threatened with all kinds of worldly adversity.

Therefore, in agreement with the principles here laid down, all passages which appear to me inconsistent

with them, or which I cannot understand, are placed among the corruptions of Judaism, or the mysteries and miracles of Babylon. My book is, 'The Bible of the Reformation Reformed,' and contains the whole of the Old and New Testaments, according to the received English Protestant version, with preface, index, table of contents, and short appendix. The present titles of the chapters are omitted, and new titles are given. The present numbers of the verses are still retained, for the sake of easy reference by those well acquainted with scripture; but the whole of the sacred volume, it will be perceived, is under an entirely new arrangement in all its parts.

And the sectarians said, 'By what authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority?' I also will ask them some questions. By what authority did the primitive Christians change the sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, abandon circumcision, and dispense with the Jewish ritual? Christ gave no such authority, but said expressly, 'I came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil them; and whoever shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; and whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great.' By what authority did King James reject the Apocrypha, as uncanonical? By what authority reject some passages and whole epistles as uncanonical? Why did Erasmus reject the two gospels? And by what authority do the Jews reject the New Testament altogether? By the same authority do I these things.

That the Bible is not the Religion of any Christian Sect, and that no Sect is Christian.

Sectarianism, meeting us at every turn, paralyzing every benevolent effort, preventing every useful improvement, and opposing every kind of useful reform, is an obstacle that must be removed, or no onward progress in religion can take place.

Any society or community which adopts a system of religious opinions and principles, the whole or any part of which is incapable of demonstration, is, correctly speaking, a religious sect. The Jews, the Christians, the Mahometans, the Pagans, in this extended sense of the word, are only so many sects. The professors of Christianity in our own country, founding their opinions on the partial interpretations of the Scripture, the decisions of Councils, the traditions of past ages, Acts of Parliament, liturgies, creeds, catechisms, and other writings and teachings of fallible men like themselves, are again subdivided into a hundred smaller sects, each pertinaciously and dogmatically insisting on being the only true Church of Christ, indulging in the most uncharitable feelings towards each other, expelling, disowning or excommunicating those who differ from them in the smallest trifles, and not unfrequently consigning them to endless perdition. This is the spirit that produced all the religious persecutions of Christians by Jews and Pagans, of Jews by Christians, Protestants by Catholics, Catholics by Protestants, Dissenters by Churchmen, Unitarians by Trinitarians, Dissenters by Dissenters, and those who do not wish to join any of these parties, by them all. This unholy spirit has caused unnumbered cruel, sanguinary and unjust wars among pretended Christian nations; dictated and carried into effect that masterpiece of human wickedness and folly, the bloody crusades to the Holy Land, and sacrificed a million of peaceful Christians in the vain and foolish attempt, (by murder, fire and sword), to wrest the holy sepulchre of the meek and humble Jesus, 'the Prince of righteousness and peace,' from the hands of infidels.

This unholy spirit, added to the unholy and unchristian feelings towards each other, expelling, disowning or excommunicating those who differ from them in the smallest trifles, and not unfrequently consigning them to endless perdition. This is the spirit that produced all the religious persecutions of Christians by Jews and Pagans, of Jews by Christians, Protestants by Catholics, Catholics by Protestants, Dissenters by Churchmen, Unitarians by Trinitarians, Dissenters by Dissenters, and those who do not wish to join any of these parties, by them all. This unholy spirit has caused unnumbered cruel, sanguinary and unjust wars among pretended Christian nations; dictated and carried into effect that masterpiece of human wickedness and folly, the bloody crusades to the Holy Land, and sacrificed a million of peaceful Christians in the vain and foolish attempt, (by murder, fire and sword), to wrest the holy sepulchre of the meek and humble Jesus, 'the Prince of righteousness and peace,' from the hands of infidels.

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Further proof of the evil tendency of this carnal, unchristian spirit is wanted, read in letters of blood in the past history, and (to the shame both of Parliament and the British people) witness its effects in the present degraded, impoverished, and miserable state of Ireland.

I shall now proceed to examine the principles and constitutions of the various religious sects, from which examination it will plainly appear—

That the Bible is not really the religion of any of these sects, and that none of these sects are Christian.

First, I ask the Roman Catholic. 'What is your religion?' or where is it to be found?' He replies, 'Part of my religion is in the Bible: the remainder is in the traditions of the church, and the decrees of its general councils.' 'Do Roman Catholics exercise the right of private judgment?' 'No; the Holy Scriptures are not of private interpretation; in them are things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. Christ declared St. Peter the rock upon which his church was to be built, and appointed him its first bishop. The popes, bishops and clergy of the Catholic Church, all lineally descended, rightfully oradically, and anointed with the Holy Spirit from him, are, therefore, the only authorized interpreters of Scripture, and stewards of the mysteries of God. He that heareth them, heareth Christ; and he that despiseth them, despiseth Christ: as for reason, it must be obedient unto faith.'

The Catholic, therefore, does not pretend that the Bible is his only rule of faith, nor does he pretend to the right of private judgment in interpreting it; and, thus far, Catholics are the most consistent of all Christian sects. I next ask the member of the Church of England or of Ireland. 'What is your religion?' He replies, exultingly, 'The Bible, the Bible is the only religion of Protestants, and, in reading the Bible, we judge of its meaning for ourselves.' But, what is the fact? The minister of the Church of England or Ireland, before he is ordained, is obliged to declare or swear his assent and consent to the liturgy, creeds, catechisms, and thirty-nine articles of the church; and, as long as he continues to teach and preach according to these, he remains a minister of the church: but suppose, in exercising his pretended right of private judgment, he becomes convinced that some of the doctrines contained in the liturgy, creeds, &c., are not according to Scripture, and begins to preach against the liturgy and its doctrines, and discontinues the use of the whole, or part of its liturgy, creed, &c., no matter how excellent a man, or diligent, useful and exemplary a minister he may be, he is in great danger of being expelled from the church. The Bible, then, is not the religion of the Church of England, or of Ireland, but it is that explanation of the Bible that is contained in the liturgy, creeds, and thirty-nine articles of the Church; and the ministers of the churches have no right of private judgment allowed them in interpreting the Bible, or, as soon as they begin to exercise that right, they are expelled from the church.

Turn next to the Church of Scotland, to most of the sects that dissent from it there, to the Presbyterians in the north of Ireland, the Calvinists, Independents, and the Particular Baptists of England, and the Calvinistic Methodists in North and South Wales, altogether a very numerous and powerful body, and no men among us talk more about the Bible than all these: one would be ready to suppose they were all made of Bibles. Ask the Calvinist minister, then, 'What is your religion?' His answer must assuredly will be, 'The Bible, the Bible only, and we claim the right of private judgment in its interpretation.' But what is the fact? The Calvinist minister, before he is ordained, must declare his belief in the doctrine of Election, perhaps of Reprobation; also, the Assembly's Catechism, Confession of Faith, Book of Scripture Proofs, &c. But suppose the Calvinist minister, belonging to any one of these numerous churches, from searching his Bible, should become convinced that the doctrine of Election, or any other of the doctrines contained in his books, is unscriptural, and should begin to teach his people so: as sure as he

is a man, however excellent his character might be, or whatever might be the consequences to his family, he would be expelled from that body. The Bible, then, is not the religion of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterians of Ireland, or the Calvinists of England or North Wales, but it is that explanation of the Bible that is contained in the doctrine of Election, Assembly's Catechism, the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, &c., some or all of these, and there is no exercise of the right of private judgment for any of these ministers, but on pain of losing their situations, perhaps of starvation.

We come next to the Wesleyan Methodists, Old Connection, New Connection, Association, Independents, Kilhamites, Warrentes, Church, and Dissenting Wesleyans: no sect, not even the Calvinist, is more loud in professions of attachment to the Bible. The Bible, the Bible only, is the religion of Wesleyans. The fact is, I was present at the Methodist Conference, Brunswick Chapel, Liverpool, a few years ago, when thirty-one young persons were chosen; and, before they were elected, they were asked certain questions—1st. Do you believe the Bible? I do. 2d. Will you preach according to the Bible? I will. 3d. Have you read the Rev. John Wesley's large volumes of sermons? I have. Do you believe the doctrines contained in Mr. Wesley's large volume of sermons? I do. Will you preach the doctrines contained in these volumes of Mr. Wesley? I will. Well, it so happened that the Rev. Mr. Cook, Methodist travelling preacher, stationed at Rochdale, and New Church, in Rosendale, some years ago, from reading his Bible, became convinced that John Wesley's favorite notion, in his large volumes of sermons, the *Witness of the Spirit*, had no foundation in Scripture. He wrote a pamphlet upon the subject, and began to teach his new views of Scripture to his people. He was an excellent character, and much beloved, and many of his hearers embraced his new opinions. The consequence was, that complaint was made of him to the Conference, and he was expelled from the Connection. The Bible, then, is not the religion of the Wesleyan Methodists, but it is that explanation of the Bible that is contained in John Wesley's large volumes of sermons, and there is no exercise of the right of private judgment for their ministers; for, no sooner do they attempt to exercise the right of private judgment, than they are expelled from the Connection.

We come now to the Unitarians, the greatest host of all, and ask him, 'What is your religion?' He says, 'It is the Bible, the Bible only; and so strictly are my opinions scriptural, that that I can express every article of my faith in the very words of scripture; and no other sect exercises so much freedom as we do in reading and judging for ourselves.' But, how is it with the Unitarian minister? Before he is chosen, he is expected to declare that he does not believe in the deity of Christ, the Trinity, Original Sin, Atonement, &c. But, suppose the Unitarian minister should, after being chosen, from reading his Bible, become convinced that, after all, some of the orthodox doctrines—the Trinity, Atonement, &c., are true, and should begin to preach them to his people: it is certain that, however good, talented or useful a man he might be, the Unitarians would expel him from their pulpits. The Bible, then, is not the religion of Unitarians; but it is that explanation of the Bible which they themselves have set up; and though the people of this and other sects may exercise the right of private judgment before their ministers, they are allowed no right of private judgment at all.

We come, last of all, to the Quaker, and ask him, 'What is thy religion?' 'The Bible, read under a patient waiting for God's Holy Spirit, is my religion; and sure, as we have no creed, and our ministers are not hirelings, we can search the Scriptures freely, and exercise the right of private judgment to its full extent.' But, what is the fact? That Firmian, of Portsmouth, Rathbone, of Liverpool, and, lately, Hicks, of America, having, from searching their Bibles, study and reflection, embraced opinions somewhat varying from those of Fox and Barclay, and having begun to preach them among the Quaker people, were disowned by them, and expelled from their body. The Bible, then, is not the religion of the Quaker; but it is that explanation of the Bible which Fox and Barclay have set up; and there is no right of private judgment for their ministers, though not paid; for, as soon as they begin to exercise it, they are turned out.

I might enumerate many other sects; but there are the principal ones. I know of no Christian sect, except perhaps, the Free-thinking Christian, that is founded upon that glorious liberty wherewith Christ came to make us free. They are all entangled with the yoke of bondage. There is not a Christian sect whose religion is the Bible; there are no ministers of religion who enjoy the right of private judgment in interpreting the Bible. The minds and consciences of the ministers of religion of all denominations are bowed down to a string of propositions, the narrow creed of the sect, from which they must not swerve to the right hand nor to the left, on pain of expulsion. The ministers of religion are like horses tethered in a field, that walk round and round, and pick up their pasture in a circle. The people say, if not in words, to their minister, 'Now, sir, go stand in that pulpit, and be sure you do not tell us anything that we do not already believe, because, if you should dare to tell us any thing we did not know before, or preach to us any thing we do not already believe, we will turn you out.' The ministers of religion have nothing to do with the Bible more than just to give it a twist to make it suit their creed; nor have they any thing to do with religious truth: all they have to do is to make the best excuses they can both to themselves and others, for teaching and preaching the dogmas of their sect. Being thus the greatest mental slaves in society themselves, their policy constantly is to enslave the minds of their people, to stifle, and not to encourage, inquiry. The Catholic clergy prohibit their members from reading any books on religion, even the Protestant translation of the Bible, or attending any public worship but their own. The Church of England and Ireland priest says, Do not read the books, nor attend the conventicles of the Dissenters. The Methodist preacher dissuades his hearers from reading Calvinistic books; the Calvinist from reading John Wesley's and all the sects unite in condemning the books and teachings of Unitarians, Deists, and Atheists, who are generally classed together by them, to mark their abhorrence of them the stronger.

But, are any of these sects Christian? Let us see. 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,' says Christ, 'that ye love one another; and the true love is known by its fruits.' Let us then try all the different sects by the only criterion Christ ever laid down to distinguish his disciples—namely, love one to another. Roman Catholics are known by their believing in the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the authority of the Pope, and the supremacy of St. Peter, but not by their love to each other; they are not a Christian sect. Churchmen are known by their adherence to the Liturgy and Creeds of the Church, but not by loving one another: they are not a Christian sect. The Calvinists are known by their belief in Election, the Assembly's Catechism, &c., but not by loving one another: they are not a Christian sect. The Quakers are known by their broad-brimmed hats and brown coats, but not by loving one another: and they are not a Christian sect. I know of no Christian sect that makes the only criterion of discipleship ever laid down by Christ its distinguishing feature; any more, I know scarcely an individual, man or woman, of any sect, that loves his neighbor as himself, or that would be willing, in imitation of Christ's example, which we are all bound to follow, to lay down his life for his friends. 'They are altogether gone out of the way of Christ; there is none that doeth good' to the extent Christ requires, 'no, not one.'

That the Scriptures, as at present arranged, can be made to prove the dogmas of every sect. 'Search the Scriptures,' said the divine Author of

Christianity, 'for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.' 'Search the Scriptures, for they are they which testify of me,' has been reiterated by all the thousand founders of sects, in every age of the Christian church, and this is still the cry. It is a curious matter, and worth inquiring into.

Twenty-four Catholic bishops say of the Douay Bible, lately published, 'This new edition of the English version of the Bible, printed with our permission by Richard Ceyne, No. 4, Chapel street, Dublin, we, by our authority, approve, and declare may be used with great spiritual profit by the faithful, provided it be read with due reverence and the proper dispositions.' The translators of the English Protestant version, appointed to be read in churches, hailing 'the appearance of' King James 'as of the sun in his strength, instantly dispelling supposed and varnished mists;' 'as that sanctified person, who, under God, is the immediate author of their true happiness;' 'whose very name is precious;' and, 'as the principal mover and author of the work, humbly craves his most sacred Majesty's approbation and patronage,' and that it may be 'sustained by the powerful protection of his Majesty's grace and favor.' The one, therefore, is the Popish Bishops' Bible, and the other the Protestant King's Bible, both equally entitled to respect.

The Catholic priest says, 'Read not the Protestant translation of the Bible; it is an unfaithful and bad translation. Search our Scriptures, for they testify of all our leading doctrines.' Of transubstantiation it says, 'I am the bread of life; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed; as the heavenly Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me.' Protestants believe with us the doctrines of the trinity, of original sin, atonement, &c., but we challenge them to produce evidence from Scripture in favor of any of these doctrines half so strong as we produce in favor of transubstantiation and the great sacrifice of the mass. Our doctrine of the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, of the authority of the priesthood, of confession, &c., are equally well founded in Scripture. You wrong us, therefore, in saying the Bible is not the religion of Catholics. 'Search the Scriptures again, for they are they which testify of our doctrines.'

I reply, Gentlemen of the Romish Church, there have been in past ages, and are now, many thousands of Catholic priests and pastors, of the greatest learning, talent, piety and zeal, men who have spent their whole lives in searching the Scriptures, and have labored, suffered and died for the cause; and I cannot suppose for a moment that all these holy men were either insincere or incapable of judging correctly. The Scriptures, I believe, do teach the Catholic doctrines. I grant this, gentlemen, most freely.

Next comes the minister of the Church. 'I am grossly slandered,' he exclaims, 'by the assertion that the Bible is not my religion. What if we do make use of the Liturgy in our church services? The Liturgy is taken from and founded in Scripture, by us correctly translated. Our church is governed by archbishops, bishops, &c., because it is scriptural. We reject transubstantiation and the mass as blasphemous fables, dangerous conceits, and unscriptural doctrines. (Acts 31); and one of our Articles expressly says, "Whosoever is not contented in Scripture, nor may be proved thereby, is not an article of faith or necessary to salvation."'

I reply, Gentlemen of the English and Irish churches, thousands of burning and shining lights have sprung up in your community in past ages, and thousands now adorn it, whose lives have been devoted to the study of Scripture. I would not do them the insult or the injustice to suppose them incompetent to judge of its meaning, or insincere in declaring its conformity to their faith. I believe the Scriptures, rightly understood, do teach the doctrines of the Church.

Here comes the minister of the Kirk of Scotland, and an Irish Presbyterian, reading the solemn league and covenant. We shall, without respect to persons, endeavor the extirpation of popery and prelacy (Church of England government by archbishops, bishops, &c.) and whatsoever shall be found contrary to Scripture and sound doctrine, let us be partakers of other men's sins and receive their plagues.

I reply, it would be most uncharitable to suppose that so many thousands of learned, pious, disinterested ministers of the Scotch Church, many of whom suffered persecutions of all kinds, even to death itself, could be mistaken in understanding the Scriptures. I grant that the Scriptures do teach Church Government by prebys and elders.

But here comes John Calvin, representative of the doctrines of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterians of Ireland, the Independents, Particular Calvinists, Calvinistic Methodists, Methodists in Wales, &c. He affirms that the true doctrine of Scripture is, that God has elected some men and angels to everlasting life, and others to everlasting death, without any foresight of faith or good works, but out of his own free grace and love; others, not elected, though they may be called, can never truly come to Christ, and therefore cannot be saved.

Answer. So many thousands learned and talented ministers have taught, suffered and died